

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 1437

EXDIS- SPECAT FOR MILITARY ADDRESSEES

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: THIRD ROUND: DISCUSSION
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN STILL WANTS DEC 17 MEETING AND FEELS MUST BE IN REYKJAVIK BUT IS SEEKING PERMISSION OF PRIME MINISTER TO ABSENT HIMSELF FROM FINAL WEEK OF PRE-CHRISTMAS PARLIAMENT SESSION IN EVENT WASHINGTON BETTER SITE. ALSO SEEKING ADVICE FROM PRIME MINISTER REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF POSTPONING DECEMBER SESSIONS TO JANUARY WITH APPROPRIATE ARTICLE VII SAFEGUARDS. FONMIN STATES OUR PROPOSALS ON MILITARY REDUCTIONS DO NOT GO FAR ENOUGH TO SATISFY HIS POLITICAL PARTY. INFORMATION NEEDED FOR A NEW TABLE THREE. SOME REACTIONS FROM WASHINGTON NEEDED BEFORE DECEMBER 3. END SUMMARY.

2. I HAD A VERY FRANK 45 MINUTE CONVERSATION WITH FONMIN AGUSTSSON YESTERDAY ABOUT THE IDF ISSUE. I ASKED HIM BLUNTLY IF HE COULD ASSURE ME THAT GOI WILL NOT AT ANY MOMENT OF ITS CHOOSING WHEN IT SUITS ITS DOMESTIC POLITICAL INTERESTS PULL RUG OUT FROM UNDER US AND SUBMIT LEGISLATION RECOMMENDING FULL IDF WITHDRAWAL ON ASSUMPTION ALTHING WILL SAVE THE BASE. HE REPLIED THAT ALTHOUGH THERE IS AS YET NO DECISION ON TACTICS HE COULD NOT GIVE ME THE ASSURANCE I SOUGHT. HE SAID
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GREATER CONCERN WAS TO KEEP HIS OWN PROGRESSIVE PARTY (PP) FROM DISINTEGRATING OVER THE IDF ISSUE THAN CONCERN OVER ATTITUDE OF COMMUNIST PEOPLES ALLIANCE (PA). HE SAID TACTICS WILL BE DETERMINED BY WHAT BEST SUITS PP. AT A RECENT MEETING

OF PRO-IDF ELEMENTS IN PP IT WAS DECIDED THAT U.S. CONCESSIONS OFFERED DURING NOVEMBER SESSIONS WERE NOT SUFFICIENT TO BUCK THE PA OR TO PREVENT THE PP ANTI-BASE ELEMENTS FROM BOLTING. FONMIN WAS UNABLE TO SAY WHAT THE MAGIC FIGURE IS THAT WILL ACCOMPLISH HIS PP OBJECTIVE. WE THEN HAD AN ARGUMENT AS TO WHEN A POLITICIAN MUST ALSO SHOW HE IS A STATESMAN AND THINK OF THE BEST INTERESTS OF HIS COUNTRY DESPITE SOME POLITICAL DISCOMFORT. I SUGGESTED HE LOOK BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF ICELAND AND RECOGNIZE THAT WHAT ICELAND DOES REGARDING IDF IS MORE THAN A BILATERAL US-GOI MATTER, THAT IT HAS MULTILATERAL IMPLICATIONS AND AFFECTS MBFR EFFORTS AND ALL OTHER WESTERN EFFORTS TOWARD DETENTE AND THAT AN ADVERSE ACTION BY GOI WHICH DISREGARDS THE INTERESTS OF ITS NEIGHBORS REPRESENTS AN ARROGANCE WHICH DOES NOT FIT A COUNTRY SO DEPENDENT ON FOREIGNERS FOR ITS LIVELIHOOD. I ADDED THAT WHENEVER ICELAND DOES NOT WANT TO FACE UP TO ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UN (AS FOR INSTANCE ON THE KMER RESOLUTION WHICH I HAD DISCUSSED WITH HIM EARLIER) IT HIDES BEHIND THE PRINCIPLE OF "NORDIC SOLIDARITY." I SUGGESTED HE GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THIS PRINCIPLE ON SOMETHING THAT VITALLY AND DIRECTLY AFFECTS ALL THE NORDIC COUNTRIES. I USED OPPORTUNITY ALSO TO TAKE ISSUE WITH A STATEMENT HE MADE TO THE PRESS A COUPLE WEEKS AGO THAT MIDDLE EAST CRISIS WAS OF NO DIRECT CONCERN OF ICELAND AND I LECTURED HIM ON THE TRUE MEANING AND WHY ICELAND SHOULD BE CONCERNED.

(COMMENT: I HAVE COUPLE OF TIME IN PAST USED THIS SORT OF "SHOCK TREATMENT" WITH GOOD RESULTS AND NO BAD EFFECTS IN OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP.) IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION AS TO WHETHER IT IS CONCEIVABLE GOI WILL SUBMIT IDF LEGISLATION PRIOR TO CHRISTMAS RECESS DEC 21, HE SAID HE COULD GIVE ME HIS UNEQUIVOCAL ASSURANCE THIS WOULD NOT HAPPEN.

3. WITH REGARD TO MILITARY REDUCTIONS, HE ASKED IF WE COULD OFFER FURTHER CONCESSIONS. I EXPRESSED SOME DOUBT, ESPECIALLY IN ABSENCE OF A PERSONNEL SECURITY SYSTEM, BUT STATED THAT IN SECRET

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ACCORDANCE WITH PROMISE MADE TO HIM BY UNDER SECRETARY PORTER THIS IS BEING LOOKED AT AGAIN. HE REMARKED HE WOULD HAVE TO BE HONEST WITH US AND SAY HE DOUBTED TOTAL ICELAND LABOR AVAILABLE FOR BASE POSITIONS IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE WOULD EXCEED A FEW HUNDRED AND THE CHANCES OF ICELAND INITIATING A SECURITY SYSTEM PRACTICALLY NIL. HE SUGGESTED WE ASSUME MOST OF THE CIVILIANS WILL HAVE TO BE AMERICANS, STIPULATING IN THE MOU, HOWEVER, THAT THIS WAS UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE WORK CAN BE TAKEN OVER BY ICELANDERS. HE ASKED WHETHER GREATER USE OF AMERICAN CIVILIANS WOULD ENABLE US TO REDUCE MORE MILITARY. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION HE SUGGESTED THAT OUR BASIC HARD CORE MILITARY FIGURE BE BELOW 2000, EXCLUDING THE 445 ROTATIONAL MANPOWER, AND THAT WE STIPULATE IN MOU THAT THE

REDUCTIONS PROPOSED CONSTITUTE ONLY AN INITIAL EFFORT WHICH WILL BE CONSTANTLY EVALUATED WITH THE AIM THAT FURTHER REDUCTIONS WILL BE OFFERED AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT. HE SAID THAT IF WE CAN FORMULATE SOME PHRASEOLOGY WHICH IMPLIES GRADUAL AND CONTINUOUS REDUCTIONS (WITHOUT SPECIFYING A TIME LIMIT), HE WOULD BE WILLING TO TRY OUT THIS PLAN WITH HIS PARTY. I TOLD HIM I WOULD TRANSMIT THESE VIEWS TO UNDER SECRETARY PORTER.

4. FONMIN MENTIONED OUR HC-130 SAR DEPLOYMENT PROPOSAL AND REMARKED WAS NOT REALISTIC TO CONSIDER SINCE HE WOULD HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH FISHERMEN AND GENERAL PUBLIC IF THESE PLANES LEFT ICELAND. I TOLD HIM THAT WAS HIS PROBLEM AND THE OFFER STANDS. HE WILL HAVE TO TELL US FORMALLY THAT THIS UNIT MUST REMAIN IN ICELAND.

5. TALE THREE (TITLED ESSENTIAL MILITARY COMPONENTS OF THE IDF); FONMIN ASKED FOR NUMBERS OF MILITARY MANPOWER BY THE UNITS SPECIFIED. I TOLD HIM WE WERE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE THIS INFORMATION TO HIM SINCE IT WOULD DIVULGE CLASSIFIED INFORMATION TO PEOPLES ALLIANCE ALTHING MEMBERS AND OTHERS WHO WERE NOT ENTITLED TO HAVE IT. I REMARKED ALSO THAT I WOULD LIKE TO RETRIEVE THE TABLE AND ELIMINATE THE COLUMN LABELED "COMPONENTS" FOR THE SAME REASON. HE THEREUPON GAVE THE TABLE TO ME, ASSURED ME NO COPIES WERE MADE AND THAT HE DID NOT SHOW IT TO ANYONE IN THE CABINET, HIS PARTY OR THE ALTHING. IN RETURN I AGREED TO GIVE HIM A NEW TABLE THREE, GROUPING AND RENAMING UNITS WHERE NECESSARY TO PROTECT SECURITY AND TO SECRET

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SUPPLY FIGURES ADDING UP TO EITHER 3317 IF WE WANTED TO SHOW THE TOTAL SETUP, INCLUDING ROTATIONAL UNITS, OR "ANY OTHER MEANINGFUL TOTAL." IN OTHER WORDS, WE HAVE COMPLETE FLEXIBILITY IN WHAT WE SHOW ON THIS TABLE PROVIDED HE IS ABLE DERIVE FROM ALL THE TABLES WHICH WILL THEN BE IN HIS POSSESSION SEVERAL FIGURES THAT ADD TO 3317.
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ACTION SS-30

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----- 113763
O 291145Z NOV 73 ZFF-1
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 REYKJAVIK 1437

(EXDIS- SPECAT FOR MILITARY ADDRESSEES)

6. DATE AND SITE OF NEXT NEGOTIATING SESSION: FONMIN SAID HE RECEIVED LETTER FROM KROYER THAT MORNING SUGGESTING DECEMBER SESSION BE POSTPONED UNTIL JANUARY BUT FONMIN FEELS THERE MUST BE SIGNS OF CONTINUOUS PROGRESS AND TWO MONTHS GAP IS TOO LONG. HE ALSO FEELS WORK PRESSURES DECEMBER MAKE MEETING IN REYKJAVIK NECESSARY. HE ASKED MY PERSONAL VIEWS ON KROYER'S PROPOSAL. I REMARKED JANUARY HAD MERIT SINCE ALTHING WOULD NOT BE IN SESSION, AND SINCE HE AND PRIME MINISTER WANTED A STRETCH-OUT OF THE NEGOTIATIONS TO JANUARY AND FEBRUARY THIS WOULD HELP ACCOMPLISH LATTER. ALSO JANUARY WOULD BE AN EASIER MONTH FOR HIM TO GO TO WASHINGTON IF HE FELT PRESSED IN DECEMBER. I SPECIFIED, HOWEVER, THAT I WAS CERTAIN USG WOULD WANT ASSURANCE, PREFERABLY IN WRITING, BUT COULD BE AN ORAL PUBLIC STATEMENT, THAT POSTPONEMENT TO JANUARY WAS ON HIS INITIATIVE AND, THEREFORE, THE ARTICLE VII PERIOD IS EXTENDED TO JANUARY 25. I AGREED TO SEEK UNDER SECRETARY PORTER'S VIEWS ON JANUARY POSSIBILITY AND CONDITIONS (AS SPECIFIED BY ME) AND HE IN TURN WILL SEEK PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS AS TO WHETHER HE CAN ABSENT HIMSELF TO GO TO WASHINGTON IN DECEMBER OR WHETHER PRIME MINISTER PREFERS JANUARY, WITH CONDITIONS SPECIFIED. WE AGREED TO REPORT BACK TO EACH OTHER DECEMBER 3.

7. STABILITY OF THE GOVT: DURING OUR CONVERSATION FONMIN REMARKED THAT HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE COMMUNISTS CAN ACCEPT
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THE LABOR SETTLEMENT THAT IS INEVITABLE AND THEREFORE PERSONALLY BELIEVES GOVT WILL FALL ABOUT MARCH OR APRIL NEXT YEAR. THE COMMUNISTS WILL USE AS REASON, HOWEVER, PROCRASTINATION OF THE GOVT ON THE BASE ISSUE. ELECTIONS WILL THEN BE HELD IN JUNE AND THE IDF WILL BE THE MAIN ELECTION ISSUE. I THEREUPON ASKED WHY WE WERE STRAINING TO JEOPARDIZE THE SECURITY OF ICELAND BY WEAKENING THE IDF IF THE IDF WILL BE THE ELECTION ISSUE. HE REPLIED WE WILL NEED THE VOTES OF HIS PARTY TO RETAIN THE BASE AND AT PRESENT A MAJORITY OF HIS PARTY IS OPPOSED TO THE BASE UNLESS APPROPRIATE MODIFICATIONS ARE MADE.

8. COMMENT: IT IS OBVIOUS FONMIN IS FUMBLING AND HAS NO IDEA OF WHAT AN ACCEPTABLE HARD CORE MILITARY LEVEL WOULD BE. THE ENTIRE CONVERSATION CAN PROBABLY BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS: USG MUST HELP KEEP PROGRESSIVE PARTY FROM FALLING APART OR ELSE USG WILL BE A LOSER TOO. ALTHOUGH WE DO INDEED HAVE A CONCERN, I AM NOT THAT PESSIMISTIC. IF POSSIBLE I SUGGEST WE TRY

TO REACH A HARD CORE FIGURE OF SOMEWHERE IN THE 1900S AND
IN ORDER TO CAPTURE THE ACTIVE INTEREST OF PRIME MINISTER
(WHO WILL TURN OUT TO BE OUR BEST FRIEND) I SUGGEST WE OFFER
TO ASSIST ICELAND TO ENHANCE HER COAST GUARD INSHORE PATROL/
SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITY. THIS WOULD ALSO BE A SOP TO THE SDP
AND DEFUSE SOMEWHAT ITS DEFENSE PROPOSALS (PREVIOUSLY REPORTED).
THIS CAN ALSO BE OUR NEW DRAMATIC PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD MAKE
A MEETING IN WASHINGTON TO HAVE BEEN WORTHWHILE IN THE EYES OF
THE ICELANDIC TEAM. IT ALSO HAS ADVANTAGE OF SHOWING CONCERN
OVER DEFENSE OF ICELAND WITH ARGUMENT THAT BECAUSE OUR PROPOSED
REDUCTIONS SO DRASTIC ICELAND MUST PLAY A JOINT AND ACTIVE ROLE
IN ORDER NOT JEOPARDIZE ICELAND'S SECURITY.

9. GUIDANCE REQUESTED BEFORE DECEMBER 3:

(A) COMPOSITION OF NEW TABLE THREE;

(B) ANY FURTHER THOUGHTS ON SITE AND DATE OF NEXT SESSION,
ESPECIALLY PREFERENCE ON FORM OF ASSURANCE IF POSTPONED TO
JANUARY. FRANKLY I WOULD BE WARY OF AN INFORMAL, PRIVATE
ORAL ASSURANCE. A SITE IN EUROPE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. MUST
BE EITHER REYKJAVIK OR WASHINGTON.

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Message Attributes

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